United Nations A/72/774–S/2018/176

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Agenda item 44
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I transmit herewith two documents detailing the infringements of international air traffic regulations and violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey (see annex I) and the illegal use of closed ports by Turkish warships (see annex II) during the month of January 2018.

I also wish to inform you that the occupation regime illegally issued two notices to airmen relating to exercises conducted by the Turkish Air Force in January 2018.

It should also be noted that Turkish commercial aircraft systematically use the illegal airport of Tympou. In addition, Turkey continues to systematically harass civilian and military aircraft within the Nicosia flight information region (FIR) via radio calls. Meanwhile, Nicosia FIR infringements and violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus continue unabated. Turkey's policy of persistently breaching international law and defying international rules and regulations puts the safety of international civil aviation at risk, has a negative impact on the stability of the region and causes difficulties for air traffic over Cyprus.

The above-mentioned actions of Turkey, which has illegally occupied the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus since 1974, are clearly aimed at undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, bolstering the continuing de facto division and upgrading the secessionist entity's status by claiming a purported airspace over the occupied territory of the Republic. In that respect, I would like to underline, once again, that there is only one legal authority in Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, as stipulated in various Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984), in which the Council declared the establishment of the so-called "trnc" as null and void.

On behalf of my Government, I strongly protest the continuing infringements of international air traffic regulations and the violations of the national airspace and the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey and appeal for their immediate cessation. The Republic of Cyprus reiterates, in this respect, its call for adherence to the principle of sovereignty and non-interference enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

18-03414 (E) 090318

Please recycle

Finally, I would like to urge Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots to heed the calls of the international community and contribute to a meaningful resumption of the peace process, instead of focusing on undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, bolstering the continuing de facto division and upgrading the secessionist entity's status.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kornelios **Korneliou**

Annex I to the letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Air violations

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
2 January	1409–1614	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia flight information region (FIR) without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia area control centre (ACC)
3 January	1007–1030	One AB-200 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1340–1355	One AB-200 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
6 January	1347–1637	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
7 January	1000–1050	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
9 January	1113–1246	One AB-412 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1410–1640	Two Cougar Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1833–1945	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
11 January	1008–1050	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
	1018–1124	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1348–1511	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
15 January	1133–1155	One KC-135 and two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1302–1319	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1341–1348	Four F-16 and two F-4 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1358–1404	Two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
16 January	1320–1403	One K-35R Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
17 January	1000–1113	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1046–1106	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1450–1536	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1540–1603	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
19 January	1041–1208	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1333–1538	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1510–1551	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
20 January	1056–1120	One King Air Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
21 January	1103–1129	One K-35R Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
22 January	1426–1507	One KC-135R and two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
23 January	1029–1131	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
29 January	1027–1248	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1319–1420	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1430–1505	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1545–1646	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1552–1643	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
30 January	0847–1425	One Cougar Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1032–1151	One UH-1 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1240–1413	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1306–1404	Two F-16 and two F-4 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1329–1414	Two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
31 January	1012–1120	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1200–1216	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC
	1404–1422	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit and without contacting the Nicosia ACC

Annex II to the letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Naval violations

Dates	*Nature of violation*
2–10 January	One P-332 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
9–11 January	One F-505 Turkish frigate violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
11–13 January	One P-332 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
13–16 January	One P-338 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
14–16 January	One NL-123 Turkish vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta
16–17 January	One F-245 Turkish frigate violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
17–24 January	One P-338 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
20 January	One NL-123 Turkish vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta
24 January	One F-245 Turkish frigate violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
24–29 January	One P-332 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
28–30 January	One P-332 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
28–30 January	One F-501 Turkish frigate violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces
30 January	One P-338 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces

Dates	*Nature of violation*
31 January	One P-338 Turkish missile vessel violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed port of Famagusta while participating in a naval operation of the occupation forces

United Nations S/2018/177

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith an information bulletin dated 2 March 2018 from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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Annex to the letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (2 March 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 16 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: 11 in Damascus, 3 in Ladhiqiyah and 2 in Aleppo.

The Turkish representative office has reported five incidents of gunfire in Damascus Governorate.

Most of the incidents of mortars and small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters belonging to terrorist groups.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation in Mismiyah, Dar'a Governorate. Food with a total cargo weight of 1.9 tons was delivered to the local population.

In total, 1,763 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,472.1 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 96 persons.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 72,045 persons.

The safe passage of one United Nations humanitarian convoy to Afrin in Aleppo Governorate was assured. Food and essential items with a total cargo weight of 159 tons were delivered to the local population.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, 18 ceasefire agreements have been signed with populated areas in Aleppo, Dayr al-Zawr and Homs Governorates.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 2,426.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

United Nations A/72/782–S/2018/178

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
9 March 2018

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Agenda item 65
Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 1 March 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Spain, together with Germany and Namibia, has the honour to transmit herewith the Technical Operative Guidelines of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, agreed upon in December 2017 (see annex).

We also take this opportunity to inform you that Germany has taken over the annual chairmanship of the Focal Points Network, as of January 2018. Spain and Namibia, as the outgoing and next Chairs, respectively, are part of the Network's troika.

We should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 65, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Christoph **Heusgen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Neville Melvin **Gertze**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Jorge **Moragas**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 1 March 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Namibia and Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network Technical Operative Guidelines December 2017

Background and objectives

The Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network was created to assist Member States and regional organizations to improve and strengthen the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda at the origin of decision-making processes. The initiative stems from a commitment made by Spain during the high-level review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which was held in October 2015. The founding meeting of the Network was organized by Spain in September 2016, with the co-sponsorship of Canada, Chile, Japan, Namibia and the United Arab Emirates.

The Network affirms that Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations are the most influential actors in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and have the primary responsibility for ensuring that global commitments and obligations are effectively integrated into domestic policies and legislation.

The Network serves as a cross-regional forum and provides space in which to share experiences and best practices so as to advance the implementation of all Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security and to improve the coordination of funding and assistance programmes. The Network also encourages information flow with relevant forums, such as the Security Council Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

Membership and actors

Membership of the Network is open and all Member States and regional organizations are encouraged to become members and assign a focal point to the Network.

Current Network membership includes 78 focal points.[1]

Members nominate themselves for the chairmanship. In any given year, the incumbent, previous and next Chairs constitute the troika, which is responsible for providing guidance to the Network on operational and substantive issues. Spain

[1] Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, African Union, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Union for the Mediterranean.

served as Chair in 2017. Germany will chair the Network in 2018 and Namibia in 2019.

The Network will meet once a year in one of its member States, the meeting generally being hosted by the incumbent Chair, with at least one additional follow-up meeting in New York.

Membership requests will be received by the secretariat of the Network and shared with the wider Network. Focal points are expected to exercise a leading role in women and peace and security efforts at the national and regional levels and to maintain direct and ongoing contact with other focal points in order to advance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

The Network also recognizes civil society and local organizations as critical partners and will ensure their substantive participation in Network meetings and initiatives.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) serves as the secretariat of the Network and will assign a coordinator to manage that function. The secretariat provides technical and operational support to the troika and the Network. It will ensure regular communication with and the flow of information to Network members, manage knowledge products of the Network, support the planning of meetings and foster membership, advocacy and partnerships.

The troika will meet regularly with the secretariat to set timelines for the Network's actions to be carried out and to ensure that the goals of the Network are fulfilled.

Focus areas

Through regular engagement with focal points, the Network will promote momentum and continuity in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda at the national and regional levels. The Network areas of focus include:

- Raising gender equality as a matter of women's rights and a means to enhance peace and security.
- Promoting a gender perspective in all peace and security efforts and ensuring that a gender-responsive approach also includes a focus on men's gender roles, abuse against men and men's responsibility for promoting women's influence in peace and security.
- Promoting the development of high-impact national and regional action plans and strategies on women and peace and security.
- Integrating gender analysis in all security assessments and prevention approaches, including early warning, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping;
- Strengthening women's participation, including at a high level, in the security sector and peace and political processes, such as peace agreements, implementation, reconciliation and reintegration, and mediation efforts.
- Addressing conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and other gender-based violations of rights and strengthening services and access to justice in response to such violations.
- Addressing existing and emerging security threats, such as violent extremism, terrorism and climate change.
- Promoting capacity-building at the local, national and regional levels for a variety of actors.

As a cross-cutting issue, the Network will aim to promote sustained and predictable funding for women and peace and security efforts, which constitute a cross-cutting issue.

Role of members

Network members are expected to share updates and progress on their women and peace and security actions through the Network's newsletter and at its meetings of the Network. Members are also encouraged to promote the Network and its objectives at relevant forums where the women and peace and security agenda can be advanced.

Communication

A newsletter will include, as appropriate, updates on proceedings of the Network, member action, innovation in policy and practice, as well as lessons and best practices, in order to increase exchange and expertise.

United Nations S/2018/179

Security Council

Distr.: General
7 March 2018

Original: English

Identical letters dated 1 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the programme of the Italian chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2018 in view of the briefing that the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, Angelino Alfano, will deliver to the Security Council in his capacity as OSCE Chair on 8 March 2018 (see annex).*

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council in accordance with rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

(*Signed*) Sebastiano **Cardi**
Ambassador

* The annex is being circulated in the language of submission only.

18-03570 (E) 090318

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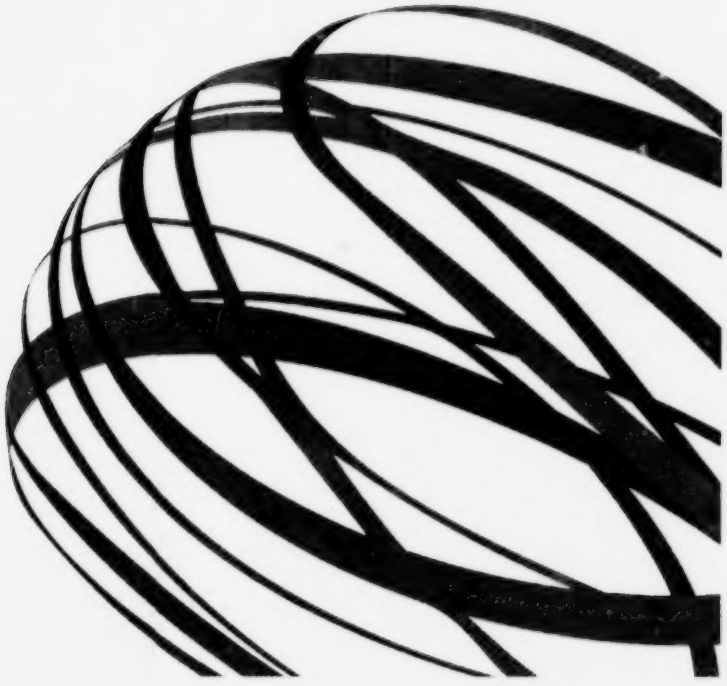
Annex to the identical letters dated 1 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

PROGRAMME OF THE
ITALIAN OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP 2018

OSCE
Italy 2018

DIALOGUE, OWNERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY



OSCE
Italy 2018

Strengthening multilateralism, as an instrument to relaunch the "Spirit of Helsinki" and to further promote peace, security, stability and cooperation from Vancouver to Vladivostok. This is Italy's key priority as 2018 Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

As the largest regional security Organization in the world, with its 57 participating States and over one billion inhabitants, the OSCE has a key role in tackling the challenges and the risks of our time. It is up to us to enhance its unique capacity to maintain stability, reinforce mutual trust and strengthen security in an extremely sensitive scenario.

Building upon the history of success of our Organization, which has significantly contributed to the maintenance of peace in Europe for the last 43 years, we are eager to work intensively for the future of our common endeavor, on the basis of all CSCE and OSCE principles and commitments.

We are aware of the difficulties and of the complex issues we are about to face, but we remain highly confident in the contribution of all participating States in order to achieve results of common interest.

Italy will spare no effort in trying to build bridges and to favor consensus. Under the motto **"Dialogue, Ownership, Responsibility"** the Italian OSCE Chairmanship approach will be:

- open, transparent and inclusive;
- geographically three-dimensional, focusing on the Euro-Mediterranean region along with the Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian regions;
- gender-sensitive, mainstreaming a gender-perspective into all initiatives;
- firm in principles, flexible on working methods;
- based on joint ownership of the Organization by all participating States.

I feel honored to serve as Chairperson-in-Office in order to contribute to the common work of the 57 participating States. We strongly count also on the support of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Partners for Co-operation, the Secretariat and the autonomous Institutions of OSCE. Together we can fulfill our common mission to provide security and stability to our region.

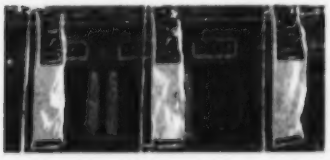
Angelino Alfano
Minister of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

FOSTERING COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY

These are extremely complex times as far as **security in the OSCE area** is concerned. Recently, in our region, the **crisis in and around Ukraine** has called into question the very principles on which the OSCE is based. Furthermore, we shall keep our focus on all the major **protracted conflicts** and their impact on the life of civilian populations, in **Georgia** or concerning **Nagorno-Karabakh** and **Transdniestria.**

We are convinced that the **respect for fundamental rights and freedoms** for all individuals is a key precondition for long-lasting peace, security and sustainable development. If fundamental rights are protected through the legal system and in every day's life, the rule of law is affirmed and security is guaranteed. If there is no such protection, conflicts multiply and social and political instability may arise. Italy intends to promote an open and inclusive approach, respectful of cultural differences and sensitivities, while reiterating its full commitment towards the universal character and interdependence of all human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. **We will also devote particular attention to countering all forms of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination including those based on religious grounds.**

The politico-military dimension is one of the main pillars of the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. Italy will continue to advocate for the full adherence to the OSCE principles and commitments by all participating States to restore the European security architecture, for the full use of the existing politico-military toolbox, and for an effort to update and modernize the existing instruments such as the Vienna Document. Italy will also promote meaningful dialogue and exchanges within existing formats as well as through the so-called "Structured Dialogue on current and future challenges and risks to security", with the aim of creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating conventional arms control and confidence- and security- building measures in Europe. In addition, we will promote opportunities for military-to-military contacts, such as through seminars on military doctrines and factual analyses of military postures. We will also encourage further discussions on current threat perceptions.



Transnational threats to security are increasingly relevant in OSCE work. Italy is committed to effectively address the spread of **terrorism** and to prevent violent extremism and radicalization. We attach the utmost importance to identifying and weakening the links between terrorism and criminal activities. Consistently with our aim to sustain truly durable peace, we shall promote a **holistic approach to countering terrorism**, entailing protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, addressing its root causes, investing in education and culture, as well as in the empowerment of women and youth.

Illicit traffickings are among the most serious threats to security and stability in Europe. Small arms and light weapons, cultural heritage, illicit drugs, hazardous waste and wildlife are all subject to the risk of illicit trafficking. As cross-border phenomena, these have close linkages with transnational organized crime groups, international money laundering, corruption networks and terrorist organizations. Italy wishes to raise awareness on the variety of illicit traffickings across the OSCE region and contribute to further develop the ongoing cooperation in this field.

We will also fight corruption in all its forms, because corruption deeply affects the rule of law and undermines the relationship - built on trust - between the Government and citizens. Therefore, corruption threatens the basis of democracy and security; as well as the stability and competitiveness of the economic system.

Italy intends to focus on meaningful implementation of the existing confidence-building measures developed in the field of **cyber security** with a view to avoid the risk of conflicts stemming from the use of information and communication technology (ICTs). We will promote initiatives to increase awareness by decision-makers on how ICTs can impact on international peace and security, also through the involvement of academia and the private sector, and to strengthen communication exchanges and cooperation among participating States as well as with Partners for Co-operation.

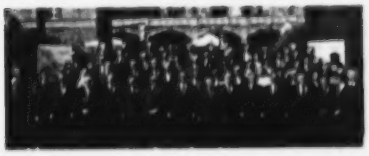
ENHANCING DIALOGUE AND TRUST

The **Economic and Environmental Dimension** of OSCE provides a terrain where common and less conflicting interests can contribute to restore dialogue and trust among the participating States. The crises and challenges that we are currently facing in the OSCE area have seriously damaged trust and confidence among the participating States as well as within States; divisions are growing and affecting cooperation in all spheres of security. Therefore, Italy is committed to building upon the achievements and the initiatives of the most recent German and Austrian Chairmanships, in order to enhance the role of the Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE in supporting stability and security.

Bridging the inequality gap through responsible leadership will be the main priority of the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship in the Economic and Environmental Dimension. In this regard, Italy will focus on issues such as the development of human capital, the promotion of good governance models and the optimization of digital economy. These are key elements of a transformation aimed at ensuring sustainable growth and inclusive prosperity with a view to contributing effectively to the security in the OSCE region.

Italy will also promote further opportunities for dialogue through the organization of thematic meetings that will see the active involvement of representatives of the OSCE participating States, OSCE executive structures and field operations, business and civil society organizations, as well as academia.

FOCUSING ON THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BEYOND



Lasting peace and security requires sustained and coordinated efforts. The OSCE Chairmanship cannot face contemporary security challenges without the assistance, goodwill and support of all OSCE participating States and Partner countries. **Addressing the challenges and opportunities stemming from the Mediterranean, such as migration**, is one of the areas where such coordinated efforts represent a fundamental priority. We intend to address this issue not only from a security point of view, but also in terms of the economic potential of migration as well as through combating intolerance and discrimination, including on religious grounds, and highlighting the importance of fostering pluralism and inclusion.

This is why we wanted our Chairmanship of the OSCE to be anticipated by the Mediterranean Conference of Palermo (24-25 October). Today, the **"Spirit of Palermo"** is helping construct a genuine partnership among the 57 OSCE countries and our Mediterranean partners.

One example is combating **trafficking in human beings**, particularly along migratory routes, which involves combating trafficking networks, protecting victims and strengthening co-operation with Partner countries. Vulnerable groups, such as women and children, deserve special attention, since they are the most exposed to the risk of being trafficked.

Today's challenges are global in nature and can only be managed together. To rise up to those challenges and identify common responses, we need to intensify and deepen our political dialogue, especially with

the **OSCE Partners for Co-operation**. We value the experience of Partners in facing global challenges and we wish to further promote the level of their engagement in the Organization. Italy relies on Partner countries' strong engagement in the activities of the OSCE and is committed to further developing our collaboration, in close coordination with the Austrian and Slovak Chairmanships of the Asian and Mediterranean Contact Groups, respectively.

IMPLEMENTING OUR COMMON COMMITMENTS

At the OSCE, the participating States have developed a comprehensive, consensual and valuable set of commitments. We would like to focus on their implementation, knowing that the exchange of best practices among us and the continuous dialogue with all relevant stakeholders would strengthen the stability of the whole OSCE area. In this regard, the **OSCE Secretariat**, including its Conflict Prevention Centre, the **OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE autonomous Institutions** - the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative for the Freedom of the Media - are extremely important added values for our common work.

The implementation of the **OSCE Gender Action Plan** will also be high on our agenda. We all should do more to protect and promote women's rights in accordance with Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and strengthen our efforts to combat all forms of violence against women.

The OSCE is not only Vienna-based. Its **Field Operations and Missions, including the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine**, are the backbone of the Organization and deserve the full support by all Participating States.

The Italian Chairmanship will work tirelessly to preserve and develop the operational capacity of the OSCE.

United Nations A/ES-10/768–S/2018/180

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
7 March 2018

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Identical letters dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to draw your attention to the ongoing critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and, more specifically, to the continued repressive practices by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinian worshippers and holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, including one of the holiest churches in Christianity, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Recent developments highlight once again the urgent need for efforts by the international community, particularly the Security Council, to collectively act to stem the dangerous deterioration so as to avert further instability; to ensure respect for the relevant United Nations resolutions, including with regard to the status of Occupied East Jerusalem as an occupied territory, the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the prohibition of all acts aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the City; and to ensure respect for the historical status quo at the holy sites.

In light of ongoing attempts by the occupying Power to change the status of the City and in contravention of the historical status quo, on Sunday, 25 February 2018, leaders from the Roman Catholic, Armenian and Greek Orthodox churches were compelled to announce the closing of the doors of their churches, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in united protest against Israel's discriminatory policies, which undoubtedly aim at weakening the Christian presence in Jerusalem.

This decision by church leaders was premised on a series of ongoing and systematic attacks against Christians, violating their most basic rights. For example, a so-called bill was proposed in the Israeli Knesset that would allow Israel, the occupying Power, to confiscate church-owned land leased to private investors, a bill that solely targets the properties of the Christian community. Another proposed measure targeting churches would see churches starting to pay tens of millions of dollars in taxes on their assets and properties.

Moreover, the occupying Power has already seized hundreds of thousands of dollars from the largest churches in Jerusalem, including the Catholic, Greek

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Orthodox, Anglican and Armenian Orthodox churches. Liens placed on church accounts and the freezing of bank accounts, such as that of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem, have already stunted churches' daily operations in the city. Recently, a representative of the Greek Orthodox patriarchate stated: "All of our assets are frozen...we can't pay for food, salaries, administration, nothing". In an ecumenical letter penned on 14 February, the churches expressed their view that this measure "both undermines the sacred character of Jerusalem and jeopardizes the Church's ability to conduct its ministry in this land on behalf of its communities and the worldwide church".

These illegal actions breach centuries of precedent and existing agreements and betray international obligations that guarantee the rights and the privileges of the churches. Since the Ottoman period, all church property has been exempt from municipal property taxation. In this regard, please find annexed to this letter a fact sheet regarding the historical status quo and its meaning and implementation across the years.

Following rejection and resistance from both Palestinians and international religious and political leaderships worldwide, as well as the closing of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for three days in protest of Israeli policies, Israel was compelled to retreat from its hostile assault on the heart and birthplace of Christianity on 27 February by suspending its so-called legislation on the imposition of taxes on churches and their properties.

This incident proves yet again that when people of conscience and members of the global community hold Israel to account for its violations, the occupying Power is compelled to respond, whereas a lack of accountability fosters only further impunity, compounding the violations and hastening the deterioration of the situation.

In this regard, it is clear that since the announcement on Jerusalem by the United States, on 6 December 2017, Israel has taken increasingly forceful action to tighten its control over the city. Indeed, while the Israeli plan regarding the churches specifically has been temporarily suspended due to popular and international pressure, Israel's plans and attempts to change the status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem continue unabated, and Palestinians (Christians and Muslims) continue to be systematically prevented from reaching their places of worship in Jerusalem, as the City remains under Israeli occupation, siege and security control.

Clearly, recent measures against Christian churches are an attempt to severely change the status of Jerusalem and to further entrench Israel's illegal occupation of Occupied East Jerusalem and impose Jewish exclusivity over the City as a whole, a City whose status remains that of *corpus separatum* under General Assembly resolution 181 (II). In fact, the latest series of measures by the occupying Power are a continuation of its series of so-called "laws", proposals and measures targeting the City, which expose its true intentions to alter the character, status and demographic composition of Jerusalem, in direct and grave breach of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In this regard, it is imperative to recall that Palestinian holy places and institutions have existed for centuries, long before the creation of the State of Israel. Yet, for decades now, Palestinian Christian and Muslim holy sites have been the target of Israeli occupation measures seeking to distort and negate the sanctity, history, culture and relevance of these human heritage sites, while simultaneously attempting to eradicate the Palestinian identity and presence. Here we must recall the affirmation by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas that "There will not be a vibrant Palestinian society without its Christian component. The contributions of our Christians to the national movement have been precious, always remembered, and represent an example for the rest of our region to make clear that there will not be an Arab world without Christians, an inherent part of our societies".

The international community has a clear, legal position on the status of the occupied State of Palestine, including occupied East Jerusalem, and must reject all violations of that status and demand that Israel's unilateral, provocative and illegal decisions be rescinded and regarded as null and void. Israel must be compelled to totally cease and not just suspend its measures against churches and the historical status quo in Jerusalem. It must be obliged to rescind all policies and practices that target Palestinian Christian and Muslim holy sites and that violate international law and United Nations resolutions, and must refrain from any such acts in the future.

In light of ongoing Israeli violations, we urge collective efforts to ensure that the historical status quo in Jerusalem that has prevailed for centuries be maintained. As expressed by the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, the Reverend Olav Fyske Tveit, "This situation should call for support and action from church leaders as well as from governments that are concerned about Jerusalem as a shared Holy City of the three religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam".

We thus reiterate our appeal to the international community to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to respect the historical status quo of the holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem and to comply fully with the numerous relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and General Assembly resolutions pertaining to the holy sites, including resolution ES-10/19. The occupying Power must show respect for the sanctity of the holy sites and respect also the role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as the custodian of the Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. All illegal Israeli measures regarding the holy sites must be reversed and guarantees must be put in place so that such measures, or any other provocative measures, for that matter, will not be repeated, as they only risk exacerbating religious sensitivities and tensions, which must be averted at all costs.

We call upon the international community to take a firm and principled stand against all illegal Israeli actions against the Palestinian people and their land, including by firmly demanding that it immediately cease all measures and provocations violating the status quo of the holy sites and cease its provocations and stoking of religious sensitivities. The international community must act responsibly and take serious action aimed at compelling Israel to cease all of its crimes and violations before it is too late and to act forthwith to end the occupation that began in 1967. These steps are urgent and long overdue and are essential to allowing the Palestinian people to finally live in freedom and dignity in their own independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

This letter is in follow-up to our 624 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 12 February 2018 (A/ES-10/767-S/2018/113), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador, Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The historic "Status Quo" agreement in Jerusalem and the Israeli occupation, in the light of Israel's attempt to impose municipal taxes on church property: frequently asked questions (1 March 2018)

1. What is the "Status Quo"?

Jerusalem is one of the most important religious cities for the three monotheistic religions. It hosts thousands of religious, archeological, and heritage sites that are holy for billions of people worldwide. Over the centuries, traditions and agreements between the various religions and religious groups have been forged to set forth each religious group's rights.

The Status Quo describes the arrangements between different religions and religious groups over shared or contested religious sites. While it enshrines many rights and obligations, one of its most fundamental rights is that any religious community that has a current right must consent to any change, either in procedure or substance.

2. Is the Status Quo Enshrined in International Law?

The Status Quo is a unique legal system that applies to whichever authority exercises control over Jerusalem. The rights and obligations enshrined in the Status Quo remain even when the governing authority in Jerusalem changes. As a specific set of legal obligations that have been created over centuries of practice and now are considered binding international law, it supersedes any and all aspects of domestic law.

The core of the Status Quo was set out in an Ottoman Farman in 1757, then later confirmed in an Ottoman Farman in an 1852 Farman, and codified by international treaty in the 1856 Treaty of Paris and the 1878 Treaty of Berlin. The Status Quo obligations were enshrined in the Partition Plan's Statute on Jerusalem and was its continuation was a core concern of the international community in the events following 1948. A report by the 1949 Conciliation Commission on Palestine laid out in more precise detail the locations protected by the Status Quo arrangements.

Every governing authority over Jerusalem is required to uphold the Status Quo as a distinct legal obligation.

3. Which countries are involved in the Status Quo?

During the Ottoman period, foreign powers became involved in order to ensure the rights of certain communities. The rights of the Catholic Church and Community[1] became the responsibility of France, Italy, Belgium and Spain, and Greece for the Orthodox Community. This has become an accepted practice that has lasted, in the case of the Catholic Church, from the Ottoman period until today.

[1] See Custodia Terrae Sanctae, "Status Quo," available at http://www.custodia.org/default.asp?id=433.

4. What are Israel's Legal Obligations Regarding Taxation of Church Property?

Since the Ottoman period, all church property has been exempt from municipal property taxation. This obligation was initially created by the Ottoman government's practice, accepted by the British during the Mandate Period, enshrined in the 1947 Partition Plan (which proscribed imposing taxation on any new properties), followed by the Jordanians when they controlled Jerusalem, and has been practiced by Israel for many years since their occupation of East Jerusalem.

Like the formal arrangements of the Status Quo, the long-standing practice of not taxing church properties has crystallized into an international legal obligation over the governing authority of Jerusalem.

Furthermore, as per Article 43 of the 1907 Hague Convention, the occupying power is required to respect the laws in place at the time of occupation, unless absolutely prevented by military necessity. Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem remains null and void under international law and consensus, and East Jerusalem remains in a state of prolonged belligerent military occupation. As such, the requirement to abide by local law remains; Israel's attempt to change this is not permitted under the law of occupation and general principles governing international humanitarian law.

5. What is the official position of the State of Palestine regarding the Status Quo and the taxation of Church property?

The State of Palestine has reaffirmed its commitment to the Status Quo on several occasions, including in the historic Palestine-Holy See Agreement of 2015. As the birthplace of Christianity, Palestine values the presence of a vibrant and active Christian community as an integral part of its national identity and social fabric. Therefore, and aiming at supporting the important educational, social, cultural and spiritual work of the local churches, the State of Palestine exempts Churches and church property from taxation and customs duties.

6. Does the Status Quo extend to other religious sites?

The Status Quo understandings concern both Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the Buraq Wall (Wailing Wall), amongst several other religious sites in Jerusalem. A full accounting and list of the sites protected, and the relevant rights for each religious community and the determination of which community (if any) is in exclusive possession of the sites, are laid out in the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine in 1949.[2]

Prepared by the Negotiations Affairs Department/State of Palestine/Palestine Liberation Organization

[2] http://ecf.org.il/media_items/1467.

United Nations S/2018/181

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ahead of the preparation of your first report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018), I have the honour to forward to you information on violations of that resolution by terrorist groups and illegal armed groups in Syria from 27 February to 2 March 2018 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vassily **Nebenzia**

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Annex to the letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

27 February 2018

Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists operating in eastern Ghutah and militants of illegal armed groups carried out targeted mortar and sniper shelling of the humanitarian corridor set up near the former Palestinian camp, the Wafidin camp, to allow civilians to exit the area. Five women trying to leave Ghutah and a few Syrian soldiers were reportedly injured.

Seventeen people were injured as a result of rocket and mortar strikes by terrorists on the Damascus districts of Duwaylah and Mazra'ah, the university campus, Beirut and Aleppo streets, Tahrir Square as well as Jaramana and Assad suburbs. One mine hit the warehouse of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. There were also several explosions next to the French Hospital.

Jabhat Al-Nusra terrorists opened fire from small weapons against the besieged enclave of Fu'ah and Kafraya north of the city of Idlib. Two people were injured.

Illegal armed groups affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra shelled Matnin village in eastern Hama. One civilian was killed.

Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists entrenched around al-Lajat in north-eastern Dar'a shelled from mortars and large-caliber machine guns the area of Mi'sarah along the road connecting the towns of Izra' and Shaykh Miskin in the southern de-escalation zone. One woman sustained injuries.

Terrorists in control of the former Nazihin camp for Palestinian refugees in the town of Dar'a launched seven mines on the local police station.

The illegal armed group Jaysh al-Nasr shelled from Grad multiple rocket launchers the military airfield of Hama.

28 February 2018

Jaysh al-Islam militants operating in eastern Ghutah launched six mines in the area of the former Palestinian camp, the Wafidin camp. More than 300 civilians gathered near the humanitarian corridor but were not able to use it because of shelling.

Syrian military prevented an attempt of jihadists from eastern Qalamun to transfer to Ghutah a big lot of weapons and ammunition, including anti-tank rocket systems and anti-tank mines.

The Damascus districts of Duwaylah, Ushsh al-Wurwur and Bab Sharqi were shelled again with rockets and mortar bombs. More than 37 mines hit the Assad suburb, 5 hit the Jaramana suburb and 7 hit the area adjacent to the Ibn Sina hospital in the town of Adra.

Despite the declarations made on behalf of the main armed groups in eastern Ghutah about their readiness to observe the truce, massive and indiscriminate shelling of Damascus and its suburbs continued on a daily basis.

In the southern de-escalation zone, Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists launched from the district of al-Balad in Dar'a under their control several mines on the municipal clinic (with several education facilities nearby), killing a 13-year-old school student and a 21-year-old woman. Eighteen people were injured, mainly patients of the hospital, women and children, and nine of them remained in a critical condition.

In northern Qunaytirah, Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists launched mortar fire on the village of Jubbah and the area of Tall al-Sha'r. Militants operating in this area receive ammunition as well as logistical and financial support from abroad.

In the Homs de-escalation zone, Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists launched mortar and sniper fire against the positions of the Syrian army, triggering intensive clashes north of Rastan, south of Talbisah and east of the village of Ghantu.

In northern Hama, armed groups affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra shelled the village of Asilah.

Information on the activities of illegal armed groups in the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone undermining the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) (as of 1 March 2018, 9 a.m., Moscow time)

Jaysh al-Islam militants carried out mortar shelling of the positions of the Syrian army in Hawsh Dawwarah (13 km north-east of Damascus). Leaders of Jaysh al-Islam and Faylaq al-Rahman also plan to carry out a series of terrorist attacks in eastern Ghutah. Those groups formed a joint operation room to coordinate such attacks.

From 10.10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. in the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone, militants of illegal armed groups made three attempts to launch attacks on the Wafidin camp humanitarian corridor from the area of eastern Harasta, the western districts of Rayhan and the northern districts of Shaffuniyah. This prevented once again the exit of civilians from the zone of military operations.

There were new incidents of mortar shelling of residential areas and suburbs of Damascus from the territories under the control of illegal armed groups along the perimeter of the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone. During the 24 hours, there were 12 incidents of shelling with 29 mines and one rocket, killing one civilian and injuring six.

Information on the activities of illegal armed groups in the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone undermining the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) (as of 2 March 2018, 9 a.m., Moscow time)

In the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone, the humanitarian corridor near the Wafidin camp checkpoint was repeatedly shelled from small arms and mortars. This prevented once again the exit of civilians from the zone of military operations. Illegal armed groups continued to forcefully detain people, forbidding them to leave dangerous areas. Several dozens of men, women and children tried to reach the positions of the Syrian army in the area of Utaya controlled by Jaysh al-Islam. However, militants did not allow them to do so, responding with violence.

There were new incidents of mortar shelling of residential areas from the territories under the control of illegal armed groups along the perimeter of the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone. During the 24 hours, there were 13 120-mm mine blasts, killing one person and injuring four.

Tensions and unrest kept growing among the population. An armed incident occurred in north-eastern Duma when militants tried to disperse civilians protesting the ban to be evacuated from eastern Ghutah. Four civilians and three Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists were killed as a result of clashes.

United Nations S/2018/182

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 1 March 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fifty-third monthly report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The report covers the period from 24 January to 23 February 2018.

Of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, 25 have been verified by the OPCW Technical Secretariat as having been destroyed. The destruction of the remaining two facilities is planned for completion within two months.

With regard to the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, I note that OPCW is seeking further clarifications needed regarding activities conducted at the Scientific Studies and Research Centre of the Syrian Arab Republic, following analysis of 19 documents submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic to OPCW in November 2017. I also note, with continuing concern, that OPCW has not received any new information concerning the other remaining gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in the declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic and that these issues therefore remain unresolved. I urge the Syrian Arab Republic to extend its full and timely cooperation to OPCW.

I must reiterate my grave concern over the continuing allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, and I welcome the continuing work of the OPCW fact-finding mission as it continues to study all available information regarding these allegations. The use of these weapons is intolerable and those responsible for their use must be held accountable. The United Nations stands ready to do its part, and I urge the Security Council to find unity and to shoulder its responsibility to counter this threat to international peace and security and prevent further erosion of the taboo against chemical weapons.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

18-03406 (E) 070318

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 24 January to 23 February 2018 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Background

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2 (f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2 (f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015) noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria, along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12 (a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. This, the fifty-third monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 24 January 2018 to 23 February 2018.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

6. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) The Secretariat has verified the destruction of 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. As

previously reported, in November 2017 the Secretariat conducted an initial inspection of the last two stationary above-ground facilities in accordance with paragraph 44 of Part V of the Verification Annex to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Thanks to the voluntary contributions provided by States Parties to the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons, including contributions provided in response to the Secretariat's Note S/1541/2017 (dated 9 October 2017), the Secretariat, together with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), has begun to make all the required arrangements to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in the destruction of the facilities located at these two sites. In this regard, on 22 February 2018 the Secretariat sent a note verbale to the Syrian Arab Republic to communicate suggested amendments to the Tripartite Agreement, concluded between UNOPS, OPCW, and the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 November 2017, to reflect the work required to destroy the two remaining CWPFs. The Secretariat also issued a note verbale regarding the resources needed for the destruction. Once all arrangements are finalised, destruction will be planned for completion within two months.

(b) On 16 February 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its fifty-first monthly report (EC-87/P/NAT.5, dated 16 February 2018) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

7. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

8. During the reporting period, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) completed the analysis of the 19 documents submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic on 10 November 2017. The documents contain details of chemical weapons research and development activities conducted at the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) and acknowledge the involvement and role of the SSRC in the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical weapons programme. Based on the analysis of the documents, the DAT has determined that further clarifications regarding activities conducted at the SSRC are required.

9. On 29 January 2018, the Director-General addressed a letter to the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, Dr Faisal Mekdad, in which he asked for further clarifications regarding activities conducted at the SSRC, and attached to his letter a non-exhaustive list of questions.

10. Additionally, the Director-General stated in his letter that the Secretariat had not received any new information concerning the other remaining gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies in the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic and related submissions. The Director-General urged the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic to submit this information as soon as possible in order to allow sufficient time for it to be included in the Secretariat's next report on the work of the DAT, which will be submitted to the Council at its Eighty-Seventh Session in March 2018. Through a note verbale dated 19 February 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic provided answers to the SSRC-related questions raised in the Director-General's letter of 29 January 2018. The Secretariat is currently reviewing the answers provided by the Syrian Arab Republic.

11. As stated by the Director-General in his opening statement to the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Second Session (C-22/DG.20, dated 27 November

2017), the second round of inspections at the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the SSRC in accordance with paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5 was concluded on 22 November 2017. The samples taken during the mission were sealed, packaged, and shipped to the OPCW Laboratory, and were received at the Laboratory on 15 January 2018 in the presence of representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic. The samples were split on 9 February 2018, also in the presence of representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, and sent to two OPCW designated laboratories for analysis. A report on the second round of inspections will be submitted in due course.

Other activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

12. At the request of the Syrian authorities, the Secretariat deployed a team to several sites in the Syrian Arab Republic from 6 to 12 February 2018 to obtain further information concerning items discovered by the Syrian armed forces. The Secretariat is currently assessing the collected information and will issue a report on the mission in due course.

13. UNOPS continues to provide support to the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Tripartite Agreement.

14. As at the cut-off date of this report, one OPCW staff member was deployed as part of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

15. As previously reported, a Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the OPCW FFM and other remaining activities, such as those of the DAT. As at the cut-off date of this report, total contributions stood at EUR 15.7 million. Contribution agreements had been concluded with Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

16. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continued to study all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Conclusion

17. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the activities of the FFM and on the implementation of Council decisions EC-83/DEC.5 and EC-81/DEC.4, including declaration-related issues, as well as on the verification of the destruction of the two stationary above-ground facilities, and annual inspections of the underground structures already verified as destroyed.

United Nations S/2018/183

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 5 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 3–5 March 2018 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 5 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (3 March 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 16 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: 8 in Damascus, 5 in Ladhiqiyah, 2 in Aleppo and 1 in Homs.

The Turkish representative office has reported four incidents of gunfire in Damascus Governorate.

Most of the incidents of mortars and small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters belonging to terrorist groups.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,763 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,472.1 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 67 persons.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 72,112 persons.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours one ceasefire agreement has been signed with Buslah in Aleppo Governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 2,427.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (4 March 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 12 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: 6 in Damascus, 5 in Ladhiqiyah and 1 in Aleppo.

The Turkish representative office has reported three incidents of gunfire in Damascus Governorate.

Most of the incidents of mortars and small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters belonging to terrorist groups.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,763 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,472.1 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 85 persons.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 72,315 persons.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed with populated areas over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process remains unchanged at 2,427.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (5 March 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported seven incidents of gunfire: four in Damascus Governorate and three in Aleppo Governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported six incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: four in Damascus, one in Hama and one in Ladhiqiyah.

Most of the incidents of mortars and small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters belonging to terrorist groups.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation in Shaham, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. Food with a total cargo weight of 1.9 tons was delivered to the local population.

In total, 1,764 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,474 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 68 persons.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 72,383 persons.

Safe passage was assured for a United Nations humanitarian convoy to Dar al-Kabirah in Homs Governorate. Food and essential items with a total cargo weight of 99 tons were delivered to the local population.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed with populated areas over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process remains unchanged at 2,427.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

United Nations S/2018/184

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Security Council plans to hold an open debate on Wednesday, 28 March 2018, on the theme "Collective action to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations". The objective of the open debate is to discuss ways to improve the engagement of all actors (host nations, regional organizations, the Security Council, Member States, including troop- and police-contributing countries, and the Secretariat) in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly in today's complex and high-risk environments.

In this regard, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has prepared the attached concept note (see annex). It is our hope that the concept note will assist the participating delegations in making focused interventions. I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Karel J. G. **van Oosterom**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 2 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the theme "Collective action to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations: supporting greater impact and performance in today's complex and high-risk environments", to be held on 28 March 2018

Summary

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is organizing a high-level open debate on the theme "Collective action to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations", to be held on 28 March 2018.

The objective of the debate is to discuss ways to improve the engagement of all actors in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly in today's complex and high-risk environments. This is a shared responsibility for all actors involved (host nations, regional organizations, the Security Council, Member States, including troop- and police-contributing countries, and the Secretariat). Key to this will be how we can work together better to deliver on the primacy of the political process needed to underpin long-term conflict resolution and enhance the impact and performance of operations.

A lack of progress or even a deterioration of the situation in countries such as South Sudan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali and the high casualty rate from hostile acts against civilians and peacekeepers underscore the urgency of this issue.

Background

1. United Nations peacekeeping has played a crucial role in achieving security and sustaining peace in many conflicts, most recently in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. For millions of civilians, the United Nations is the last station that "saves them from hell". Tens of thousands of peacekeepers (military, police and civilians) do their utmost to carry out their mandate. Men and women risk their lives on a daily basis to protect others, with too many having to make the ultimate sacrifice.

2. In the past decade, the number of major civil wars has nearly tripled, and conflicts have become increasingly complex. Transboundary factors, such as environmental degradation, transnational organized crime and violent extremism, build on and exacerbate local rivalries. Often, there is no credible and inclusive political process to implement a peace agreement, and parties to the conflict are not committed to finding a lasting negotiated solution. In some situations, rebel groups, Governments, criminal organizations and other parties are actively undercutting or obstructing a political solution, sometimes blocking humanitarian access and targeting civilians caught up in the conflict. As a result, women, men and children suffer and displacement and migration soar.

3. At the same time, we are witnessing a rise in attacks, including terrorist attacks, against peacekeepers in several operations. The year 2017 saw the highest number of peacekeeper fatalities from acts of violence in absolute terms in over two decades.

4. In the majority of countries or regions where missions are now deployed, the circumstances are dramatically different from two decades ago. Some peacekeeping operations are faced with asymmetric threats and actors who do not abide by international law. In the report entitled "Improving the security of United Nations peacekeepers", the former United Nations Force Commander, Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, concluded that the United Nations and Member States are failing to adapt to the new realities in the field. In its report, the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations also identified the necessity of change and called for more tailor-made approaches.

Taking responsibility

5. In order to be able to deal with new realities, the various actors with a stake in peacekeeping operations must renew their partnership of shared responsibility and push through some of the most urgently needed reforms. These reforms require swift yet considered action by the Security Council, Member States (including troop- and police-contributing countries), the Secretariat and regional organizations.

Security Council

6. One of the main responsibilities of the Security Council is to provide peacekeeping operations with sound, realistic and — where necessary — robust mandates. Unfortunately, mandates are not always tailored to the specific context of the mission in question, and in some cases they are not entirely realistic, manageable or achievable. Moreover, mandates are not always in line with the operational challenges in the field, nor are they consistently backed up with the requisite political, financial and human resources.

7. Strengthening the primacy of the political process also involves the sequencing of mandated tasks, as difficult conflict situations may require careful choices regarding prioritization. In some situations, a solution could be to modify a mission's footprint in order to maximize its impact. In others, it may be to take a phased

approach, initially focusing on a narrower set of critical tasks and then broadening the mission's scope as the environment changes. It is up to the Security Council to forge a consensus, to sequence and focus mandates to address the most pressing priorities and to provide political support to host States, regional actors and others in order to ensure that peacekeeping missions can fulfil the tasks given to them.

8. The Security Council should set clear strategic objectives and ask the Secretariat for mission-wide strategies with concrete outcomes and a clearly articulated desired end state that supports those objectives. Such strategies should provide guidance for all mission components (military, civilian and police) and offer a clear basis for defining achievable short-, medium- and long-term goals that can be translated into component-level plans, directives and resource requirements.

9. Strategies should also take into account the activities of other United Nations actors and partners in the field, most notably the United Nations country team, regional organizations and international financial institutions. The strategies should contain benchmarks to assist the mission leadership and the Security Council in assessing progress and allow them, if needed, to make appropriate changes to the mandate or take other action. In order to achieve the desired impact, the Council needs to make decisions on the basis of better analysis of the situation on the ground, realistic goals and the availability and applicability of the various peace and security tools at its disposal. Strategic reviews can be a useful tool in that respect.

10. The Security Council has a key role to play with regard to host nations. Regrettably, the world has seen too many situations in which host nations backtrack on their commitments or violate international law. In those instances in which host nations do not cooperate with the United Nations, undermine it or even target their own citizens, the Council must be united and strong in its response, including condemnations, country visits, close engagement with regional organizations and the option of sanctions. Council members should echo these messages bilaterally at the country level.

Member States, including troop- and police-contributing countries

11. As highlighted in the reports by Lieutenant General Cruz and Major General Patrick Cammaert, it is the responsibility of Member States to provide the United Nations with adequate troops and capabilities. Troops should be properly trained, equipped and ready to face the challenges of peacekeeping in complex and high-risk environments. As emphasized in the Cruz report, underperformance can be fatal. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that 44 Member States have taken up the responsibility to adhere to the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians.

12. In addition, there is a need to change the mindset: it must be clear that peacekeepers can be called upon to step in. They must be prepared to act decisively and may need to use force in defence of the mandate, especially when it comes to protecting civilians.

13. Consecutive United Nations peacekeeping defence ministerial conferences (the most recent having been held in Vancouver, Canada, in November 2017) have been successful in producing significant pledges of troop, police and training capabilities by Member States. However, the timely availability of specialized assets remains a challenge, especially for some of the most high-risk areas in missions.

14. Despite broad agreement that their increased participation would contribute to the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping, the percentage of women in uniform has increased only slightly. Member States should step up their efforts to improve this, since women's participation in peacekeeping is instrumental to delivering peace on the ground.

15. There is growing pressure to achieve cost savings. At the same time, mandates need adequate resources. While the United Nations has a responsibility to demonstrate good stewardship of Member States' contributions, United Nations peace operations must be granted the resources required to ensure the delivery of mandates as well as the safety and security of personnel.

Secretariat

16. The primary goal of a peace operation must be to enable sustainable political processes. In pursuit of this goal, the Secretary-General needs to assert his right to engage with all parties to a conflict, particularly in settings where the legitimacy and impartiality of the United Nations are called into question by the parties to a conflict, and to report to the Security Council when the required level of commitment to the political process, or cooperation within the United Nations, is not observed.

17. Regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union, are increasingly helping to address peace and security challenges. They are often charged with leading the political processes that need to underpin long-term conflict resolution, and they are increasingly engaged in peace enforcement activities, often alongside United Nations peace operations. However, these efforts to foster a political process — through dialogue, negotiations and national reconciliation — can encounter difficulties and delays.

18. Meanwhile, peacekeeping operations face elevated risks, as well as costs, without a commensurate level of political leverage or responsibility for pushing parties to the conflict towards a peaceful settlement of disputes. Only a truly joined-up approach between the United Nations and regional and subregional actors can generate the necessary progress in the political process.

19. The Secretariat, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, has a responsibility to support missions efficiently and effectively, on the basis of demand from the field. Red tape should be cut and, where possible, responsibilities should be delegated to the field. The Secretary-General's reforms focusing on peace and security, management and the development system are an opportunity to overcome issues of fragmentation and compartmentalization, and they should strengthen the coordination between the different actors in the Secretariat, both at Headquarters and in the field. A truly integrated approach which also takes account of United Nations funds and programmes and other international assistance is necessary to deliver peace.

20. As indicated in the Cruz report, the United Nations must ensure that its missions are staffed and led by well-trained personnel with the right knowledge, equipment and mindset for the job, and it must hold those personnel to account for their performance. The Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell has helped to follow through on pledges made at leaders' summits and defence ministerial conferences and generate more commitments of contributions by Member States. This helps the Secretariat to uphold higher standards of performance and accountability and to take remedial action when necessary.

21. Critical enablers and capacities (for example, helicopters, MEDEVAC and peacekeeping intelligence) are fundamental to the success of missions in high-risk environments. Efforts by the Secretariat to ensure the availability of these capabilities must continue, with the help of long-term rotation schemes, among other things. This also requires timely and long-term commitments from Member States in delivering those critical enablers.

22. Independent mission reviews commissioned by the Secretary-General are a relatively new and useful tool, and recommendations should lead to swift changes in

the field. When proposing new or reconfigured operations, the Secretariat should also provide options that span the whole spectrum of possible responses.

23. Finally, the Secretariat should provide the Security Council with frank analysis of the conflict and honest reporting on what a mission can achieve given the means and resources available, providing the Council with options and recommendations. Those insights should be shared in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Council so as to better inform decision-making.

Conclusion

24. Managing the current challenges in peacekeeping requires all actors to fully commit to fulfilling their responsibilities in support of peacekeeping, from the political strategy to operational issues, in order to adapt to the changing nature of conflicts.

Issues for discussion

25. To help to guide the debate, Member States could consider addressing the following questions in their statements:

(a) How can we ensure that the Security Council, regional organizations and other key actors work together more effectively to pursue and deliver political solutions, and increase strategic coherence?

(b) Given the shared sense of urgency to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations in complex and high-risk environments, how should success be defined in those circumstances, and how can we better monitor progress?

(c) Specifically, what can the different actors — host nations, regional organizations, the Security Council, Member States, including troop- and police-contributing countries, and the Secretariat — do to deliver more effectively on their responsibility to improve peacekeeping operations?

(d) What actions should be taken to strengthen the whole-of-mission approach to peacekeeping operations, integrating political, civilian and military elements?

(e) How can we revive a sense of shared responsibility for the success of peacekeeping operations among key stakeholders, including the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, regional organizations, host nations and financial contributors?

(f) What should be done to ensure that the most challenging peacekeeping missions are given the required capabilities and resources (for example, finances, critical enablers and well-trained troop- and police-contributing countries)?

Briefers

- Secretary-General
- Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki
- Director of the non-governmental organization GREFFA (Women's Action, Research, Study and Training Group), Fatimata Touré

United Nations S/2018/185

Security Council

Distr.: General
8 March 2018
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 5 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and in response to the legal fallacies and malicious claims contained in the letters dated 15 January 2018 (S/2018/41) and 18 January 2018 (S/2018/46) from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council and the letter dated 16 January 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/56), I should like to state the following:

First, the United Convention on the Law of the Sea is interpreted in a manner that runs counter to its purpose in the letter dated 15 January 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates and the letter from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Bahrain. We reject that interpretation because it is a clear attempt to justify violation of the Convention by the United Arab Emirates and to avoid fulfilling the legal responsibility to perform the obligations set out therein. The States parties to the Convention have stressed its historic significance as an important contribution to the maintenance of peace, justice and progress for all peoples of the world, and expressed their desire to settle, in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation, all issues relating to the law of the sea.

Qatar is well aware that article 58, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that all States enjoy freedom of overflight in exclusive economic zones. However, that freedom must be exercised in accordance paragraph 3 of that same article, which provides that, in exercising their right to freedom of overflight, States shall have due regard to the rights and duties of coastal States and shall comply with the laws and regulations adopted by coastal States in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and other rules of international law. The meaning of the phrase "have due regard to the rights and duties of coastal States" is defined in article 301 of the Convention, which provides that, in exercising their rights and performing their duties under the Convention, States parties shall refrain from making any military threat or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or from making military threats or using force in any other manner inconsistent with the principles of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. The overflight of the exclusive economic zone of Qatar by a United Arab Emirates warplane on 21 December 2017, which I addressed in my letter of 2 January 2018 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2018/6), and the frequent violations that occurred thereafter, one of which was the incident that I addressed in my letter of 5 January 2018 addressed to the Secretary-

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General and the President of the Security Council (S/2018/23), are in line with the irresponsible and unilateral acts of provocations that the United Arab Emirates has taken, without any legal justification, towards Qatar, thereby threatening the national security and sovereignty of Qatar and regional security and stability. Bearing in mind the letter and spirit of the Convention, it is clear that the above-mentioned violations are completely incompatible with the freedom of overflight set out in the Convention. Those violations also undermine the arguments and claims set out in the letter dated 15 January 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates and in the letter from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Bahrain.

Second, in addition to the misinformation contained in the letter dated 15 January 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates, the letter dated 18 January 2018 from that same party falsely claims that, on 15 January 2018, Qatari fighter aircraft intercepted two United Arab Emirates civilian aircraft (Emirates flight EK837 and Etihad Airways flight EY371). Qatar stresses that those claims are completely unfounded and reiterates that their purpose is to draw attention away from the violations that were in fact committed by United Arab Emirates military aircraft, which I addressed in my letter of 2 January 2018, and the frequent violations that occurred thereafter, including those that I addressed in my letter of 5 January 2018.

In keeping with its desire to comply with international law, the Government of Qatar sent a letter to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) (ICAO/QTR/05003/2017) in which it refutes the claims made by the United Arab Emirates (see annex). In that letter, the Government noted that, on 15 January 2018, Qatari military aircraft were conducting routine training over the high seas. There was no incident and those aircraft did not intercept any United Arab Emirates civilian aircraft. Indeed, Qatari aircraft have never targeted civilian aircraft and will never do so. Moreover, the Qatari military aircraft remained at a sufficient distance from the United Arab Emirates aircraft because Qatari military pilots are under strict orders not to come closer to any aircraft than is necessary to determine safely its identity. Radar images of the incident that the United Arab Emirates alleges to have occurred show that there was sufficient horizontal and vertical separation between the aircraft, and that the civilian aircraft were in no danger. In its letter to ICAO, Qatar also noted that had there not been sufficient separation between the aircraft, then the Bahrain air traffic control centre, which is the authority responsible for controlling air traffic in that area pursuant to the agreement concluded by Qatar and Bahrain within the framework of ICAO, would have issued instructions to maintain the necessary separation between them. Since there was no danger or violation, the Bahrain air traffic control centre did not issue any instructions, as there was no need to do so.

The legal fallacies and malicious claims in the letter from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates are an unjustified escalation in the context of the current crisis, as the letter's author does not take into account the fact that Qatar complies with international laws and instruments concerning international peace and security.

In conclusion, the Government of Qatar reiterates that it strives assiduously to maintain good relations with its neighbours and that it complies fully with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Qatar strongly rejects any violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and maintains its inherent right to take every legal measure required to defend its borders, airspace and national security, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2018/186

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 5 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ahead of the preparation of your first report on the implementation of resolution 2401 (2018) I have the honour to forward to you information on violations of that resolution by terrorist groups and illegal armed groups in Syria from 2 to 5 March 2018 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vassily **Nebenzia**

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Annex to the letter dated 5 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information on the activities of illegal armed groups in the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone undermining the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) (as at 3 March 2018, 9 a.m. Moscow time)

1. Despite the cessation of hostilities established throughout the country, there were round-the-clock provocations and violations by illegal armed groups in eastern Ghutah, as well as in Aleppo and Ladhiqiyah governorates. Illegal armed groups continued to shell Damascus and its suburbs. There were 11 shelling incidents in the past 24 hours. A total of 28 120-mm mine blasts were registered during the day, which made it impossible to dispatch humanitarian convoys and evacuate the injured. There was destruction in Damascus, as well as injured civilians.

2. The situation in the area of the Wafidin camp checkpoint remained tense. Snipers regularly fired on the approaches to the checkpoint. Jaysh al-Islam militants in eastern Duma shelled twice from mortars the security corridor on the road to the checkpoint. This prevented once again the exit of civilians from the zone of military operations. However, two children managed to escape the blocked zone at night-time.

3. Extremists distribute leaflets demanding that people stay home, threatening them with death in case of disobedience and executing refugees in public. The people are running out of food, water and other basics.

4. Militants actively used tunnels to carry out provocations against Syrian army units. Exits from these underground constructions are situated in public places, in particular, mosques, hospitals and marketplaces. Using the tunnels, Islamists launch attacks against the positions of the Syrian military, as well as on humanitarian corridors.

5. The Syrian side conveyed information that the Jabhat al-Nusra, Faylaq al-Rahman and Ahrar al-Sham groups were preparing provocations with the use of toxic substances. The objective is to blame the Syrian army for using chemical weapons in eastern Ghutah. For this reason, the provocation is staged close to the contact line with the Syrian army. Civilian victims are supposed to be used by some Western countries to blame the Syrian leadership for using chemical weapons against its own people.

6. Jabhat al-Nusra leaders are preparing a provocation against the United Nations humanitarian convoy with medical supplies, to be dispatched soon to Duma. Jihadists plan to shell the vehicles from mortars, with the aim of subsequently blaming pro-Government forces for a violation of the cessation of hostilities.

4 March 2018. Over the weekend, Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists continued to block the exit of civilians from eastern Ghutah and opened mortar and sniper fire on the humanitarian corridor near the former camp for Palestinian refugees, the Wafidin camp, injuring several civilians.

The Barzah and Assad suburbs of Damascus underwent intensive fire on 2 March. Two children were wounded.

On 3 March, terrorists launched 64 mines on residential areas and suburbs of Damascus. Of the mines, 15 exploded near Bayruni hospital, damaging the building, and another 49 on the outskirts and in the historic centre of Damascus. Since resolution 2401 (2018) entered into force, 283 rockets and mortar shells have hit Damascus and its suburbs.

The Jaysh al-Izzah armed group, allied to Jabhat al-Nusra, fired on the positions of the Syrian army near Zalin in northern Hama.

Faylaq al-Sham militants attacked the positions of the Syrian army near Ballirmun in northern Aleppo.

There were violations of the cessation of hostilities by jihadists, growing into armed clashes with the Syrian army in Hama and Homs governorates, including near Jabburin, Kafr Nan, Mahattah, Javalik and Hulah.

5 March 2018. Jihadists launched seven mines from eastern Ghutah on the districts of Qaymariyah and Bab Tuma in Damascus. There were also explosions in Harasta, Jaramana and the suburb of Assad.

The Tishrin military hospital was shelled, as well as the medical centre in Rayhan, which sustained material damage.

In the southern de-escalation zone, Jabhat al-Nusra jihadists launched several rockets on the Kashif residential district in Dar'a and conducted sniper fire on Matar district in Dar'a, injuring several civilians. Some of them remain in a critical condition.

In north-western Hama, Jabhat al-Nusra and allied armed groups shelled Asilah and the Christian town of Muhradah.

Information on the activities of illegal armed groups in the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone undermining the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) (as at 5 March 2018, 9 a.m. Moscow time)

1. In the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone, militants repeatedly fired from small weapons on the humanitarian corridor near the Wafidin camp checkpoint. Intensive cross-fire was registered in the area of the western part of Rayhan (north-eastern part of the de-escalation zone) in the immediate proximity of the medical post for evacuees. Islamists actively used snipers. Three local civilians were wounded. This once again prevented the exit of civilians from the zone of military operations.

2. Residential areas along the perimeter of the eastern Ghutah de-escalation zone were shelled from mortars by illegal armed groups from the territory under their control. A total of 25 120-mm mine blasts were registered over the weekend, injuring one person and causing significant material damage.

3. Jabhat al-Nusra militants continue to hold civilians in eastern Ghutah as human shields. Islamists threaten people with death any time they attempt to leave the de-escalation zone and conduct searches in order to confiscate food and information leaflets with maps indicating exits from the blocked area. Those trying to keep information leaflets are detained and transferred to sharia courts.

4. Militants imposed a curfew during the humanitarian pause in the area under their control. They seized mobile phones to prevent people from contacting the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic. All public gatherings are prohibited, with the aim of not allowing people to leave the zone that terrorists control.

5. Field commanders of the "Shabab al-Sunnah" unit of the Free Syrian Army in control of the southern de-escalation zone intensified the shelling of the positions of the Syrian army in the town of Dar'a, in solidarity with the militants blocked in eastern Ghutah, using field artillery and multiple rocket launchers.

United Nations S/2018/187

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you in reference to the letters of the Syrian regime, a list of which is attached herewith (see annex), and recent remarks delivered at Security Council meetings.

Turkey categorically rejects the unfounded allegations and lies expressed in these letters and remarks. These futile distortion attempts aim to divert attention from the stark reality of the atrocities committed by the regime, which amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The regime has a well-documented record of use of chemical weapons, against its obligations emanating from international agreements and conventions to which it is party.

The regime, which lost its legitimacy a long time ago when it waged a war against the people of Syria, remains the very root cause of all the problems emanating from the Syrian conflict and will undoubtedly be held accountable for its crimes.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative

18-03472 (E) 090318

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Annex to the letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

- Letter dated 28 February 2018
- Letter dated 27 February 2018
- Letter dated 1 February 2018 (S/2018/82)
- Letter dated 28 January 2018 (S/2018/71)
- Letter dated 18 December 2017 (S/2017/1070)
- Letter dated 15 November 2017
- Letter dated 30 October 2017
- Letter dated 11 October 2017
- Letter dated 27 September 2017
- Letter dated 29 August 2017 (S/2017/740)
- Letter dated 10 August 2017 (S/2017/697)
- Letter dated 24 July 2017
- Letter dated 14 July 2017

United Nations S/2018/188

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 23 February 2018 from the representatives of Peru, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Peru and Sweden, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, and in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, hereby transmit a summary note of the meeting of the Informal Expert Group held on 30 January 2018 on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gustavo **Meza-Cuadra**
Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Jonathan **Allen**
Chargé d'affaires of the United Kingdom to the United Nations

18-03475 (E) 090318

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Annex to the letter dated 23 February 2018 from the representatives of Peru, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security: summary of the meeting on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin held 30 January 2018

On 30 January 2018, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security convened a meeting on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin as a follow-up to last year's meeting on that topic, summarized in the relevant summary note (S/2017/625, annex). Members of the Security Council were briefed by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Edward Kallon; the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Deputy Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Ruby Sandhu-Rojon; and the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), Anatole Ayissi, accompanied by relevant representatives of both missions and the Nigeria country team. At the time of the meeting, the Council was adopting a presidential statement on peace consolidation in West Africa (S/PRST/2018/3), in which the Council, apart from calling for ensuring women's participation in elections in the regions and their appointment to senior government positions, and emphasizing their role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding, emphasized specifically the need to take measures to increase the number of women in the security sector and the national bodies dealing with the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin.

Participants listed some positive developments that had occurred since last year's Informal Expert Group meeting. Both the visit by the Security Council to the Lake Chad Basin in March 2017 and Council resolution 2349 (2017) were highlighted as good practices in integrating gender equality considerations and many of the recommendations made by the Group. The joint visit of the Deputy Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict had brought continued attention to gender issues in this regional crisis. The international community had scaled up its humanitarian response and early recovery activities in 2017, reaching more people, averting a famine and containing a cholera outbreak. The Governments in the region had claimed a series of military victories against Boko Haram and the rescue of hundreds of abductees, including through negotiations for the release of 82 of the Chibok schoolgirls, who were receiving comprehensive support. The Government of Nigeria had adopted its second national action plan on women and peace and security — the first one that was tailored to the issues arising from the internal conflict — and Adamawa, Gombe and Plateau had adopted state-level action plans. At the end of 2017, Cameroon had also adopted its first national action plan on women and peace and security. Additional human rights capacity had been deployed in Nigeria to liaise with and help train the Multinational Joint Task Force and enhance the monitoring of human rights violations in the north, including for gender-based violence, and a gender adviser had recently joined UNOCA. An adviser from the Gender Standby Capacity project (GenCap) was being deployed to Maiduguri, in the epicentre of the conflict, and women's protection and empowerment was integrated throughout the humanitarian response plan for 2018, including to increase women's leadership roles in camp management, coordination and aid distribution. The gender-based violence subcluster had provided services, including dignity kits and

psychosocial counselling, to 7,000 women and girls and was working to strengthen community-based structures and responses, including community-based compliance mechanisms to report abuses in the camps.

However, the overall situation continued to be dire. The number of people affected by food insecurity had actually grown in 2017. Close to 14 million people were affected by the conflict in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe in Nigeria alone, and 54 per cent of the internally displaced in Nigeria were women and girls. The situation was still not safe for return in most areas, and the military operations against Boko Haram also disrupted livelihoods. Meanwhile, in the camps, sexual exploitation and abuse continued to be reported against camp officials, host communities and security forces. More than 4,000 women and girls had been abducted by Boko Haram to date, and while many had been rescued, new abductions continued to take place. Communities often rejected female survivors and referred to their children born of rape as "bad blood". The trend of using women and girls in particular as suicide bombers had only increased. For example, in 2017 Boko Haram had used 45 boys and 100 girls as suicide bombers in Nigeria. Six out of 10 women had experienced one or more forms of gender-based violence. To make matters worse, a regional conflict between herders and farmers, now affecting 22 out of 36 states in Nigeria, was reportedly killing more women and girls than the Boko Haram crisis, and the countries in the Lake Chad Basin were affected by multiple security crises, from separatist movements in Biafra in Nigeria and the Anglophone region of Cameroon, to the impact of the Sahel crisis in Chad and the Niger. Participants noted the continued lack of opportunities for women's meaningful participation in political dialogues, non-compliance with existing quota provisions in Chad and the Niger, and a lack of synergy among women's networks and organizations in the region. In 2017, there had been an increase in reported and verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence in Nigeria, to 997, which likely reflected a significant undercount. While the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict had been engaged in supporting the judicial response and the Government's special prosecution unit, the complementarity report of the International Criminal Court noted that, to date, not one member of Boko Haram had been prosecuted for sexual and gender-based violence. A few days after the meeting of the Informal Expert Group, as part of a mass trial of Boko Haram detainees, Nigeria had convicted the first person to be brought to justice for the kidnapping of the Chibok girls.

Member States asked questions about the Multinational Joint Task Force and its attention to gender issues, including the gender expertise requested in last year's resolution and not yet deployed, and sought clarity on the role of human rights expertise in dealing with abuses by the national security forces. They enquired about ways of reporting on the extensive gender-related provisions in resolution 2349 (2017), given the limitations of the periodic reports by UNOWAS and UNOCA, covering many other countries in the region, and were interested in the coordination between those missions on gender issues and their engagement with women's civil society organizations. Finally, they asked whether anyone was looking into and addressing the gender dimensions of the conflict between farmers and herders. In response, participants noted that human rights desks set up by the Government of Nigeria were only now beginning to receive complaints from the camps for internally displaced persons, after receiving mostly internal complaints by members of the military and their families. They highlighted the important role of ECOWAS, which included 15 gender-specific indicators out of the 66 that it used in its early warning framework. ECOWAS was also in the early stages of conducting a study on the conflict between farmers and herders, and would address the gender dimension and the role of women in community-driven development and peacebuilding. UNOWAS and UNOCA would conduct a joint mission to Chad that would have gender issues in the conflict as an important focus, and UNOWAS and UN-Women co-chaired a

working group on women, youth, and peace and security in the whole region, but they noted that there was more structured and regular engagement with women's networks with regard to the Sahel crisis than for the Lake Chad Basin crisis. UNOCA noted its intention to establish a network of women mediators in Central Africa.

UN-Women, as the secretariat of the Informal Expert Group, highlighted the recommendations that had not been implemented since last year's meeting. These included:

- Deploying gender expertise to the Multinational Joint Task Force and ensuring the systematic engagement of women's organizations with regional organizations such as the Multinational Joint Task Force or the Lake Chad Basin Commission.
- Mapping women's networks and their contribution to prevention and early warning in the region, and what kind of support they were presently receiving, from international partners or from the Governments in the region.
- Mapping the gender expertise, representation of women, and resources dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment by the regional and national institutions leading the response, from ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, to the relevant national ministries and institutions in all four countries.
- Council members should continue to raise questions about the screening, detention, return, de-radicalization and rehabilitation of women and girls and their relatives, the overall impact of counter-terrorism and military operations on women and girls and on women's organizations, and the need for proper consultation with women and women's organizations on all matters related to closures of camps for internally displaced persons and returns of internally displaced persons and refugees.

The Co-Chairs closed the meeting, thanking the briefers for their participation in the Informal Expert Group, and committed to following up with different actors to discuss which ones could take the lead in implementing the above-mentioned recommendations and resolution 2349 (2017).

United Nations S/2018/189

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Identical letters dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instruction from my Government, I have the honour to attach herewith a list clarifying the numbers of civilians dead and injured because of terrorist attacks, including mortar shells and explosive devices, committed or launched by terrorist armed groups against safe neighbourhoods in different Syrian cities and areas during the period from 22 January 2017 to 21 February 2018.

Governorate	*Number of civilians killed*	*Number of children killed among them*	*Number of civilians injured*	*Number of children injured among them*
Damascus	36	8	200	30
Damascus suburb	14	5	71	17
Dar'a	5	1	21	2
Suwayda'	1	0	11	3
Homs	3	3	10	4
Hama	3	0	8	3
Tartus	0	0	0	0
Ladhiqiyah	0	0	1	1
Idlib	0	0	0	0
Aleppo	19	1	17	1
Dayr al-Zawr	0	0	9	0
Hasakah	11	7	4	4
Qunaytirah	0	0	4	0
Raqqah	0	0	0	0
Total	**92**	**25**	**356**	**65**

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-03492 (E) 080318

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United Nations S/2018/190

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 1 March 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 1966 (2010), by which the Council established the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and, in particular, to article 10, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Mechanism, annexed thereto, on the appointment of a judge to fill a vacancy in the roster of judges of the Mechanism.

Article 8, paragraph 1, of the statute provides that the Mechanism is to have a roster of 25 independent judges.

One of the judges, Solomy Balungi Bossa (Uganda), has resigned with effect from 11 March 2018, following her election as a judge of the International Criminal Court.

Pursuant to article 10, paragraph 2, of the statute, in the event of a vacancy in the roster, after consultation with the Presidents of the Security Council and of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General is to appoint a person meeting the qualifications of article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute, for the remainder of the term of office concerned.

According to article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute, the judges are to be persons of high moral character, impartiality and integrity who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices. Particular account is to be taken of experience as judges of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia or the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The procedure for identifying a candidate for consideration for appointment under article 10, paragraph 2, is not prescribed in the Statute. In accordance with the established practice regarding the appointment of a judge to fill a vacancy at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which was adopted for the purposes of filling a vacancy in the roster of judges of the Mechanism in 2016, the State of nationality of the outgoing judge, Uganda, has nominated a candidate, Judge Elizabeth Ibanda-Nahamya, to replace Judge Bossa for the remainder of her term of office.

It is my view that Judge Ibanda-Nahamya meets the qualifications that are prescribed in article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Mechanism.

In accordance with article 10, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Mechanism, I look forward to receiving your views on the appointment of Judge Ibanda-Nahamya as a judge of the Mechanism.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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United Nations S/2018/191

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 6 March 2018 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 1 March 2018 (S/2018/190) concerning your intention to appoint Judge Elizabeth Ibanda-Nahamya (Uganda) as a judge of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention expressed in your letter.

(*Signed*) Karel Jan Gustaaf **van Oosterom**
President of the Security Council

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